

1 October 1981
MJN-8131

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Jordan Bureau Monthly Report - September 1981

I. General

A. The saga of newly arrived Ambassador Richard Viets continues. In this month's episode, one of the King's Arabian stallions reared up and over backwards just as the ambassador was mounting him, pinning the ambassador to the pavement. Apparently only the hard hat he was wearing saved his life, although he did suffer a broken arm and cracked pelvis. However, by month's end Ambassador Viets was back on his feet again and faced with the sole problem of what to wear to his upcoming audience with the King since his arm is encased in a cast from shoulder to elbow. Oh, the horse is fine. Tune in in October for the next exciting episode.

B. With Israel's plan to close the Allenby Bridge into Jordan to two-way traffic fast approaching the 1 October deadline, the Amman Embassy is still awaiting word from Tel Aviv as to just what effect it will have on embassy personnel. Alia, the Jordanian airline, has made plans to have tourists fly out of Israel via Cyprus Air to Cyprus, where it will again pick them up and fly them to their original starting points, but this isn't feasible for embassy personnel.

II. Operations

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. The bureau's third recruiting effort in as many months has finally borne fruit. Just when it looked like all the good prospects in Jordan had disappeared, we came up with two good ones for us and an excellent one for Cyprus. Unfortunately, one of our candidates will not be able to join us until December, while the other will be coming aboard in mid-October. We'll be mailing the test results of its candidate to Cyprus. With our two latest acquisitions, this bureau will be only one under strength.

2. The Embassy Personnel Officer turned down a Bureau request to increase nonstaff shiftwork wages based on pay practice at Jordanian Radio and Television. The rejection pointed out that its survey of local practices excluded Jordan-

ian governmental and quasi-governmental agencies as they pay lower wages and provide higher benefits than does the Embassy. Also in September, the Embassy received State Department notification that a June salary change survey concluded that no justification existed for an increase in FSN salaries.

3. U.S.-Jordanian tensions continued to figure prominently in the Jordanian media including further calls by nongovernmental organizations for anti-U.S. measures. Of particular Embassy concern was a King Husayn interview in the Paris-based newspaper AL-MUSTAQBAL in which he indicated apprehension that the United States might be willing to accede to the idea of a Palestinian state on Jordanian territory.

B. Lateral Services

1. The newly arrived DCM, reiterating concern expressed by the Ambassador, requested faster receipts and notification of significant incoming and outgoing FBIS and USINFO items concerning Jordanian affairs. In particular, he asked to be called directly by FBIS. Previous Bureau procedure had been to channel such material through the Embassy Political Section. During the month, the Bureau Chief and Chief Political Officer agreed on one of the two alternative pony line systems proposed by Engineering Division to speed up transmission of traffic.

III. Administration

A. Senior Editor [redacted] arrived PCS from Headquarters 31 August replacing [redacted] who departed PCS for Headquarters 10 September.

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IV. Visits

A. Budget & Finance Chief [redacted] 3-5 September TDY.

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V. Community Activities

A. The biggest event on Amman's social calendar thus far this year was the official opening of the Amman Little League Association's soccer season. The British ambassador and the U.S. charge were there to kick off the event, which was attended by the general managers of the international hotels and companies sponsoring the teams as well as parents and team members representing more than 30 nationalities. The highlights of the day were an aerobatic show by the Royal Jordanian Falcons in their biplanes and the raffling of sponsor-donated trips to London, Cyprus, etc. The day's events surpassed anything most smaller stateside cities could put on, but then again they don't receive U.S. aid. FBIS was well represented by Soccer Commissioner [redacted] League Secretary [redacted] and Coaches [redacted] and Sue [redacted]

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Chief, Jordan Bureau